

Vision, Assertions, and Guiding Principles & Priorities of the Academic Program Reductions and Curricular Adjustments Committee (Revised 5-12-21)*

Vision

To design and follow a process for program reduction and curricular adjustments that demonstrates Portland State's institutional vision of leading the way to a better future by pursuing our shared mission to serve and sustain a vibrant urban region through our dedication to collaborative learning, innovative research, sustainability, and community engagement by educating a diverse community of lifelong learners (<https://www.pdx.edu/portland-state-university-mission>).

A thriving Portland State University offers a flexible, affordable, purposeful education to a diverse range of students, with a focus on values of wellbeing, professionalism, and civic engagement. These qualities are fostered by a faculty actively engaged in their research and teaching and the effective communication of knowledge in partnership with support staff, administrators, and students with the ultimate goal of promoting the evolution and re-imagination of society.

Assertions

Although prompted by changes in enrollment, ReImagining PSU provides an opportunity for Portland State to affirm our commitment to the civic mission of public higher education for the public good. Accomplishing this goal will require bold, reflective, and visionary leadership that listens equally to the voice of all stakeholders.

The fulfillment of public higher education's social mission requires Portland State students, faculty, administrators, and staff to be fully engaged and working together while acknowledging that the process may lead to outcomes not everyone supports.

Institutional redesign must strengthen and align with our curricular priorities and our stated values of access, community engagement, equity, and inclusion. This includes our commitment to the anti-racist and anti-bias pedagogies and research practices necessary to create a socially just and equitable society, and through which we strengthen graduate employability and well-being.

Equity is co-created by developing trust through transparent collaboration. It begins at the outset of a process, and continues through everyone's participation in honest examinations of power and resources within the institution to determine the most effective distribution of those resources to achieve PSU's mission.

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principle 1: Equitable and Meaningful Engagement of All Stakeholders

An equitable process includes instructional, research, and academic professional faculty of all contract types, undergraduate and graduate students, administrators, staff, and community partners to ensure voices are diverse and fully representative. Equitably accessible participation of diverse voices will generate visionary and sustainable solutions in the design and implementation process.

Guiding Principle 2: Focus on Student Access, Quality Learning Experiences, and Completion

From improving access to higher education at PSU, to the care we provide students on their way to the completion of their degree, all decisions should reflect that student wellbeing is essential to learning. As we contemplate and implement institutional change to prepare students to be the change makers the future requires, we will build on the PSU foundation of a high-impact undergraduate liberal education and productive graduate programs.

Guiding Principle 3: Our Work Will Change, Let's Make it for the Better

Precarious working conditions exacerbate precarious student learning conditions. Resource faculty teaching, student support, and scholarship and research activities that contribute to the PSU mission. Promote and support faculty in the development of new capacities and prioritize collaboration, reassignment, and adaptive solutions rather than layoffs.

Guiding Principle 4: Research and Data Informed Decision Making

All qualitative and quantitative data, national research and scholarship, as well as diverse ways of knowing and best practices, should be contextualized and supplemented with timely analysis to inform decision making. Committees will share metrics and data with the PSU community to gather and integrate input.

Guiding Principle 5: Seek Feedback Prior to Decision Making

Everyone should have the opportunity to participate throughout the process. Details of proposals and their possible impacts will be communicated to the PSU community throughout the process for discussion and should include multiple mechanisms for timely, formative feedback.

Guiding Principle 6: Devote Resources to the ReImagining Process

Institutional reform is necessary, difficult, and time consuming work that must be planned for and resourced adequately. Therefore, contributions to this work should be balanced in-load, or otherwise fairly compensated, and recognized within professional evaluations. Establishment of a realistic process timeline is necessary to identify the additional resources required.

Guiding Principle 7: Transparent Process and Open Communication with All Stakeholders

The outcomes of this effort will be improved by equitable communication within the system of relationships in which we are all embedded—as faculty, students, staff, community partners, and administrators.

Our Priorities are to...

Proactively re-imagine PSU by collaboratively engaging a broad spectrum of university and community constituents, partners, and advocates to maximize the benefits of education while managing its costs.

Employ processes that are transparent to students and assess the student experience beyond typical quantitative metrics; strengthen learning; increase accessibility, flexibility, relevance, and the quality of the education experience. Accomplishing these goals will enhance retention, graduation rates, and post-graduation success.

Increase the diversity of faculty, staff, and administrators working at PSU.

Resource superior opportunities for literacy, numeracy, arts, humanities, culture, critical and analytical thinking skills, technical and computational proficiency, and impactful knowledge with the goal of increasing equity, social justice, and the capacity for civic and ethical engagement.

Document external recognition of distinctive, high-impact scholarship and innovative research on urgent societal challenges, and invest further in high quality disciplinary and interdisciplinary graduate programs.

Take into account external demand for the subjects, methods, credentials needed for future livelihoods and careers.

Qualitative Indicators for the APRCA Process

Consider how units support the undergraduate and graduate curriculum and general education needs (e.g., courses are taken by students in multiple majors/degrees/programs to meet requirements or as electives).

Consider how units address diversity, equity, and inclusion (i.e., contribute to these goals in a substantive way through courses, research, partnerships, and community engagement) and how they manifest these goals in their hiring, compensation, and career paths.

Consider faculty contributions and awards for scholarship, teaching, research, service, artistic achievement, advising, and leadership.

Consider program value to graduates and external partners (e.g., local, regional, and national contribution and recognition, external rankings, address needs expressed by local employers, providing skills and knowledge that address local, regional and global societal needs).

Consider the provision of classes with alternative access (e.g., remote, online) and support for part-time learners (e.g., evening classes, flexible schedules).

Consider the role of innovation, as indicated by new and updated courses, as well as investment in teaching approaches and methods.

*The Guiding Principles and Priorities document is the result of the APRCA Committee's charge by the Faculty Senate. If you would like to know more about the APRCA Committee, please see the committee webpage at: [academic-program-reduction-and-curricular-adjustments-ad-hoc-committee](#) The document will continue to emerge and be refined through conversations and input from all interested parties across campus. Where we have been remiss, insensitive, oblivious, or obscure we invite your comment to aprc@pdx.edu.